

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 16-21, 24, 27-38 and 41-44.

1. (Previously Presented) A method for processing electronic rebates utilizing a rebate server computer system, the method comprising:

linking a purchase identifier to a purchase of a product, wherein the linking comprises:

receiving, by the rebate server computer system via a network, a request for the purchase identifier from a store computer system connected to the network;

generating, by the rebate server computer system, the purchase identifier for the purchase of the product; and

transmitting, by the rebate server computer system via the network, the purchase identifier to the store computer system;

receiving information, via the network, entered by a user of a user computer system to complete a rebate claim for the purchased product;

verifying the received information to determine whether the received information includes a match to the purchase identifier previously generated by the rebate server computer system; and

accepting the rebate claim from the user if the received information is verified as a valid rebate claim.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Canceled)

4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the purchase identifier is listed on a receipt upon the purchase of the product.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the purchase identifier is contained in an electronic mail message transmitted from the store computer system to an electronic mail address accessible using the user computer system.
6. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising:
transmitting an electronic mail message containing the purchase identifier, to an electronic mail address accessible using the user computer system.
7. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising:
providing a web page, via the network, to the user computer system to enable the receipt of information for the rebate claim.
8. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising:
verifying whether the rebate claim is a valid request for the rebate.
9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 8 wherein the verifying comprises:
determining whether the rebate claim was previously processed.
10. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 8 wherein the verifying comprises:
determining whether a limit of rebates for the product has been exceeded.
11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 8 wherein the verifying comprises:
determining whether the product was previously returned.
12. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising:
issuing a check to the user identified on the rebate claim.

13. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising:
transferring the rebate electronically to an account of the user identified on the rebate claim.

14. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the user computer system comprises one of a personal digital assistant (PDA) device and a personal computer.

15. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the network comprises the Internet and the received information is submitted from the user computer using a web browser program.

16-38. (Canceled)

39. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the purchase identifier is a unique identifier utilized only for rebate purposes.

40. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the rebate server computer system is operated by a product manufacturer and the store computer system is operated by a retail store.

41-44. (Canceled)